


Appendix A

 Public Knowledge What Voice Link Doesn't Do That Copper Does		
	Traditional Copper Phone Service	Verizon Voice Link
Will 911 work during congestion?	✓	✗
Will medical alerts work?	✓	✗
Does it provide access to broadband?	✓	✗
Will home security systems work?	✓	✗
Does credit card processing work?	✓	✗
Can you make international calls (without a separate international calling plan)?	✓	✗
Will you be able to use calling cards?	✓	✗
Will you be able to receive collect calls?	✓	✗
Will you be able to make a local call without an area code?	✓	✗
Will fax machines work?	✓	✗

Appendix B

The following are just some examples of the hundreds of public comments submitted to the New York State Public Service Commission in its proceeding on Verizon's Voice Link deployment in Fire Island.¹⁵

1. "I bring my 93 year old mother who is in home hospice, to my beach house on Fire Island, and having an old fashioned landline is crucial to my feeling safe about having her there." – Sonia Gluckman, 7/15/2013
2. "We have also been relying on cell phone service through Verizon which has been spotty, at best. My cell phone works in our house while my husband's does not. He is a physician at NYPresbyterian Hospital and relies on his cell phone to take emergency calls when he is away from Manhattan. Sometimes these calls are urgent and confidential." – Maureen and Samuel J. Mann, 7/15/2013
3. "In hurricanes Irene and Sandy the land line phone service was a life saver. Without the land-line phone I would have had to keep my cell phone off to save battery power for 911 calls. I am a senior citizen. With a cell phone I could not receive calls from doctors. If land-line is dropped then people will die. Because cell phones will run out of battery power and people will not be able to call 911. My whole area was out of electricity after Sandy. I lost power for 5 days in hurricane Irene and 8 days after Sandy. My area loses power many times a year. About a month after hurricane Sandy my area lost power again for 12 hours. The land line phone has to stay." – Albert Dresner, 7/12/13
4. "The bigger issue has been internet. I and most Fire Islander's previously had unlimited DSL service (through the copper wires) for about an additional \$30 per month, tagged on to the phone service. Now, for the 4G service (which is admittedly faster), I am paying \$80 per month for just 10GIGs per month of data (I believe the cost is \$10 per month for each additional 2GIGs). Those 10 GIGs just get me and my family through a month of email, normal levels of work related internet use, and basic household internet usage One could easily spend hundreds of dollars or more per month, at Verizon's rates, in order to regain the amount of data we previously had pre-Sandy. This is where Verizon is truly taking advantage of us all, and what people are most upset about." – Keith B. Stein, 7/10/2013
5. "Cell service is often poor on Fire Island and it can often times requires several minutes to get cell service and may require you to physically move to another location to pick up service. I have previously had a heart attack and do not want to rely solely on cellular service in case of an emergency. We need a hard line service provider on the Island." – Arthur Rhein, 7/8/2013

¹⁵ See New York State Public Service Commission, *Tariff Filing by Verizon New York Inc. to Introduce Language Under Which Verizon Could Discontinue Its Current Wireline Service Offerings in a Specified Area and Instead Offer a Wireless Service as Its Sole Service Offering in the Area*, Case 13-C-0197, <http://documents.dps.ny.gov/public/MatterManagement/CaseMaster.aspx?MatterSeq=42688>.

6. "Please help with this very bad situation with Verizon service at Fire Island. They will not repair my landline, which my husband really needs, as he has a pacemaker, which has to be monitored by a land-line. They also refused to connect my DSL, even though they charged me the monthly fee right through the winter, when I questioned this, they said they would transfer me to the billing department, and I was promptly disconnected!!!! I have a Real Estate office here in Fair Harbor, and I am getting SO many complaints about Verizon service, (or, NON service)." – Jean Ufer, 7/8/2013
7. "I'm extremely unhappy and very nervous that our hardline or copper will be cancelled. We are year round residents on Fire Island and need a hard line to run our business and to monitor our property from The DSL line. After the storm, I temporarily had the Home Connect system and it worked poorly. Calls would ring for 30 plus times before I even knew they were coming through and we had no Internet which is essential to run a business. Sometimes calls didn't even go through. Please don't allow Verizon to cut our lines without offering a suitable option. VOICE LINK DOESNT WORK." – Barbra Heller, 7/6/2013
8. "I'm single, live alone and am now considered 'senior.' While I don't use the telephone too often I rely it being there for essential help in emergencies. I am active on the Internet and require it for business connections. Life without a real telephone would be precarious and dangerous on our relatively isolated island." – Patricia Robbins, 7/5/2013
9. "During superstorm Sandy, we lost power for 2 weeks. Although the telephone line fell and was across the backyard, we had telephone service. We were able to call Verizon to come and fix the line. We were able to call the children and tell them that we're ok. We also were able to call LIPA to tell them about the power outage. We are senior citizens in our 70's and are afraid of not being able to call for assistance if needed." – Robert and Barbara Grosswald, 7/4/2013
10. "My father was on life alert and many of the seniors who lives alone depend on that service. I work in a Nursing and Rehab Center and many people who have fallen and have medical issues live alone." – Mr. and Mrs. Howard Bedell, 7/2/2013
11. "As a home owner in Fair Harbor I am distressed and concerned about the 'solution' of Voice Link over the copper wire system for our phones. Already I have had an incident with being unable to make a call from my cell phone because the network was busy. Thankfully it was not an emergency call, but if it had been the delay in getting through would have been significant. With an aging mother who does come out to visit, the idea of not being able to reach 911 in an emergency is terrifying." – Jennifer-jo Moyer, 7/2/2013
12. "As a NY resident with elderly (80+) parents, and an elderly (80+) aunt with health issues and Parkinson's Disease on Fire Island for the entire summer, I am concerned that the Voice Link system will not meet their needs in a time of emergency. Cell phone signals are notoriously erratic particularly in poor weather, and particularly on Fire Island; and I am concerned that this system is more likely to fail in the event of an emergency. In my elderly aunt's case, she will no longer be able to use her medical alert

bracelet as it is dependent on a working landline. That she would be able to reach her cell phone after falling down seems unlikely.” – Ken Rothchild, 7/2/2013

13. “As a senior-age Fire Island customer since 1970, my wife and I are very dependent on a telephone system that we can rely on, especially during health emergencies. The research that I have done on the Voice-Link System tells me that its very unreliable and would be a terrible down-grading for us causing lots of anxieties. Please do not give Verizon a go-ahead ruling on their ‘consumer un-friendly plan.’” – Lee Epstein, 7/1/2013
14. We need Life Alert systems, our home alarm system and communication with the outside world, especially in times of weather disasters such as the recent Hurricane Sandy. During that storm, which caused electrical power outages, our cell phone also failed. Our landline made it possible for us to contact our son and daughter, as well as emergency sources, should it become necessary. Since we do not drive, having a landline made it possible to contact neighbors should we need food and help. There are many stresses, which accompany aging. Losing touch with the outside world should not be another source of worry.” – Phyllis and Herbert Hildebrand, 7/1/2013
15. “If Verizon were to abandon the South Bronx for landlines with the argument that the neighborhood is unprofitable due to income, credit worthiness problems or vandalism, it would never fly. Why then can Verizon be allowed to reduce service levels to Fire Island?” – Kevin Lee, 6/28/2013
16. We rely on phone service for emergency response. In the short time that we have had Voice Link we have had problems in rainy weather. The Jetpack internet service that, with our limited mobility, we rely on to order medications, food and communicating with physicians is painfully slow and does not work at all on weekends.” – R. Bruce Minoff, 6/28/2013
17. “My husband and I are seniors, and in the future may need life alert. That does not work on VoiceLink. There have been break-ins in our neighborhood, and we are going to install an alarm. That doesn't work on VoiceLink. We have been waiting not so patiently for FiOS to be installed in our neighborhood. I have initiated many complaints to Verizon for noise on our line. Our DSL is so slow, it seems as if we have dial-up Internet service.” – Jean L. Coleman, 6/28/2013
18. “If you are unfamiliar with Fire Island, there is very little medical service and the only way off the island is a scheduled ferry service or, for some people who have permits and trucks, a very long drive. When someone needs to be rushed to the hospital, they are evacuated by helicopter, which makes timely emergency calls of the essence to save lives.” – Nora Olsen, 6/20/2013